

**TOWNSHIP OF BLAIRSTOWN
COMMITTEE WORKSHOP MEETING
Held at North Warren Regional High School
10 Noe Road
Blairstown, NJ 07882
Wednesday, April 25, 2018, 7:30pm
Executive Session to be held at 6:30PM
ACTION MAY BE TAKEN IN OPEN SESSION**

MINUTES

Meeting begins at 7:30 pm or immediately following Closed Session, whichever comes last.

OPENING; ROLL CALL

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Lance. Those present were Mr. Avery, Mrs. Dalton, Mrs. Van Valkenburg, Mrs. Waldron, and Mayor Lance. Also present were Township Clerk, Linda Leidner and Township Attorney, Dawn Sullivan.

FLAG SALUTE

SUNSHINE STATEMENT

Notice of this meeting has been sent to two newspapers of general circulation in which notice was given of the date, time, place and general agenda in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act.

Resolution No. 2018 – 061 - AUTHORIZING EXECUTIVE SESSION – for the purpose of Personnel Contract Negotiations and Potential Litigation.

Motion to authorize executive session was made by Mrs. Dalton and was seconded by Mr. Avery

Roll Call Vote: Aye – Avery, Dalton, Van Valkenburg, Waldron, Lance.

All ayes – Motion carried.

Executive Session began at 6:35pm

Motion to close executive session was made at 7:30 p.m. by Mrs. Waldron and was seconded by Mrs. Dalton.

Roll Call Vote: Aye – Avery, Dalton, Van Valkenburg, Waldron, Lance.

All ayes – Motion carried.

Regular Session began at 7:31p.m.

Results of Executive Session

Mayor Lance explained that the PBA Contract was up for renewal, therefore the following Resolution was brought to a vote.

Resolution No. 2018-062 Authorizing execution of the Agreement by and between the Township of Blairstown and Blairstown PBA Local 280, January 1, 2018- December 31, 2020

Motion was made by Mrs. Waldron to authorize the execution of the agreement by and between the Township of Blirstown and Blirstown PBA Local 280, January 1, 2018 – December 31, 2020, which was seconded by Mr. Avery.

Roll Call Vote: Aye – Avery, Dalton, Van Valkenburg, Waldron, Lance
All ayes – Motion carried.

NEW BUSINESS

Mrs. Van Valkenburg began the meeting by thanking North Warren Regional High School and staff for their hospitality and assistance with the sound system and recording of this meeting.

Mrs. Van Valkenburg went on to introduce the Township Staff Members in attendance at the meeting. They were as follows: Christine Rolef, CFO; Eric Usinowicz, Acting Director of Public Works; Scott Johnsen, Police Captain and Pat Sagan, Recreation Director.

Deputy Mayor Van Valkenburg went on to present a Power Point. This Power Point will be placed at the end of these minutes. It contained the following information:

UPDATES ON 2017 -2018 Activity

1. Website
2. Water Company
3. Community Energy Aggregation
4. COAH
5. Explanation of Energy Tax Receipts Property Tax Relief Program
6. Explanation of Blirstown Tax Bill – Assessment and Tax Rate
7. Roads
8. Police

FROM THE PUBLIC – Several members of the public spoke regarding items that were presented in the Power Point.

The members of the Township Committee commended Mrs. Van Valkenburg on her presentation. It was well thought out and very informative.

Mrs. Van Valkenburg explained that she made the commitment to have a meeting like this and keep the Township residents well informed. She is also committed to the Township Committee being completely transparent.

The Power Point will remain on the Township Website for people to refer to and to see if they were not in attendance tonight.

ADJOURNMENT

As there were no further comments from the public, a motion to adjourn was made by Mrs. Dalton and was seconded by Mr. Avery.

Voice Vote: All ayes – motion carried.

The Meeting Adjourned at 9:15 p.m.



TOWN COMMITTEE MEMBERS

- *Mayor Steve Lance*
- *Deputy Mayor Giovanna (Joanne) Van Valkenburg*
 - *Committeeman Paul Avery*
 - *Committeewoman Cynthia Dalton*
 - *Committeewoman Debra Waldron*
- *Township Attorney: Dawn Sullivan - Dorsey & Semrau*

Town Employees in attendance this evening:

- *Township Clerk: Linda Leidner*
- *Chief Financial Officer: Christine Roleff*
- *Acting Director Public Works: Eric Usinowicz*
- *Police Captain: Scott Johnsen*

Agenda for this evening:

Updates on: 2017 -2018 Activity:

Web Site, Water Company, Community Energy Aggregation, COAH

Explanation of Energy Tax Receipts Property Tax Relief Program

Explanation of Blairstown Tax Bill – Assessment and Tax Rate

Roads

Police

Open Session – specific and open topics



Rules of the Meeting

- Meeting is taped for the record.
- We are here to provide information and hear from you our residents and taxpayers.
- Please do not shout out or respond to any individual in the audience.
- Step up to mic., state name and address clearly for the record.
- Direct all questions or comments to the Committee.
- Please keep questions and comments non-personal.
- We would like to address questions and comments by topic.



TOWNSHIP WEB SITE

www.blairstowntownship.org

Find a plethora of information on current events, contact information and links to many sites including the Township Code Book.

Community Energy Aggregation



Blairstown is participating in a program with Concord Energy Services to aggregate energy usage of all of its residents to obtain lower rates than can be purchased individually and to Protect the ratepayer.
Residents have the choice to participate or not participate in the program with no fee attached.

New Well for our Public Water System



Settled on Council on Afford Housing Obligation program

Energy Tax Receipts Property Tax Relief

- 1884 – Created for entities having line or mains located in, on, or over any street, highway or other public place.

provided 2% assessment on gross receipts of telegraph, telephone, cable and express companies

- 1900 – Voorhees Tax Act – extended Franchise Tax to all utilities except those subject to Railroad & Canal Property Tax Act

provided the receipts were to be returned to municipalities

- 1917 Franchise Tax rates were increased to 3%
- 1918 Franchise Tax rates were increased to 4%
- 1919 Franchise Tax rates were increased to 5%

Energy Tax Receipts cont'd...

- 1940 – Unit values applied to each class and type of utility owned
- thus securing fair & equitable apportionment

2% applied to utility's gross receipts of \$50,000 or less & 5% in excess. Subtracting administrative expenses and based on value of facility and personal property each hosted, as a % of statewide total amount was distributed back to individual municipalities.

- 1955 – Maximum rate of Gross Receipts Tax capped at 7.5%
- 1956 – Minimum of 5% set.
- 1960 – firm rate of 7.5% was established

Energy Tax Receipts cont'd...

- 1980 – At the request and convenience of the tax paying utilities, the State became the collection agent.
- 1997 – Governor Whitman signed “Energy Tax Receipts Property Tax Relief Act
- 1998 – Regulated Natural Gas and Electric Energy Utilities & Telecommunications Utilities operating in NJ which were freed from franchise and gross receipts tax now had it repealed.

Revenue for the Energy Tax Receipts Property Tax Relief Fund was raised by applying: Sales & Use Tax, Corp. Bus. Tax.

Energy Tax Receipts cont'd...

- 2009 – Governor Corzine proposed & Legislature agreed to a formula change – “needs based” cuts taken from each municipality 2009 distribution.

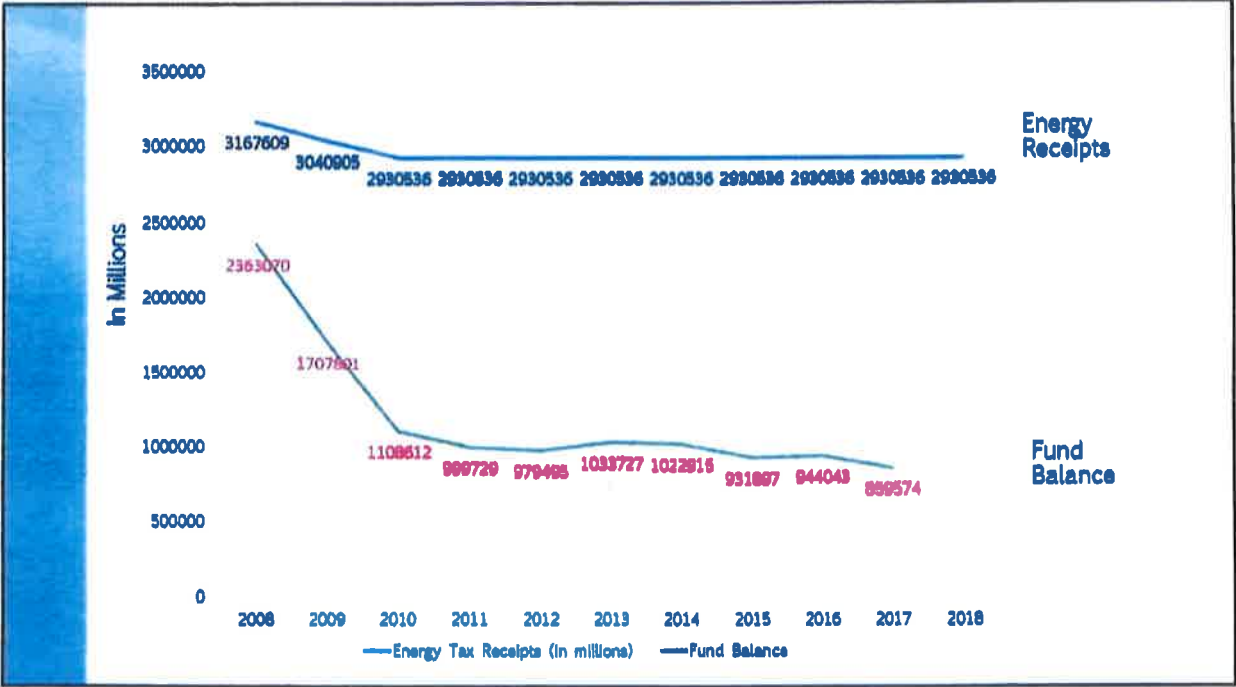
Total formula aid reduced by \$32 million.

- 2010 – Municipalities placed into nine groups based on low, medium, and high equalized tax rates and wealth.

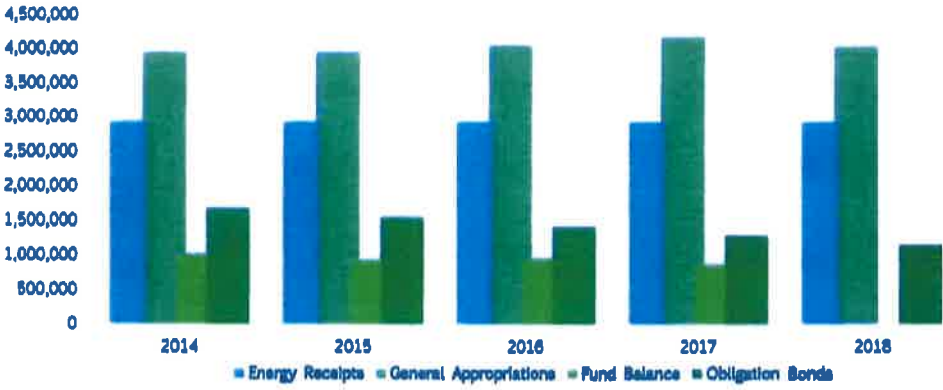
Total Cuts totaled \$272 million.

- 2011-2017 Level Funding
- 2018 Level Funding





Comparative Financial Information 2014 to 2018



2017 Blairstown Township Tax Bill			Home Assessment Values						
Description	% of Tax	Rate per \$100	\$250,000	\$300,000	\$350,000	\$400,000	\$450,000	\$500,000	
County Tax	28.90%	0.667	\$ 1,667.50	\$ 2,001.00	\$ 2,334.50	\$ 2,668.00	\$ 3,001.50	\$ 3,335.00	
Library Tax	2.30%	0.053	\$ 132.50	\$ 159.00	\$ 185.50	\$ 212.00	\$ 238.50	\$ 265.00	
County Open Space	1.73%	0.040	\$ 100.00	\$ 120.00	\$ 140.00	\$ 160.00	\$ 180.00	\$ 200.00	
Regional School	32.89%	0.759	\$ 1,897.50	\$ 2,277.00	\$ 2,656.50	\$ 3,036.00	\$ 3,415.50	\$ 3,795.00	
District School	33.36%	0.770	\$ 1,925.00	\$ 2,310.00	\$ 2,695.00	\$ 3,080.00	\$ 3,465.00	\$ 3,850.00	
Municipal Open Space	0.82%	0.019	\$ 47.50	\$ 57.00	\$ 66.50	\$ 76.00	\$ 85.50	\$ 95.00	
Tax Rate 2017		2.308*	\$ 5,770.00	\$ 6,924.00	\$ 8,078.00	\$ 9,232.00	\$ 10,386.00	\$ 11,540.00	

Divide your assessed value by 100, multiply by rate per \$100*

Town Assessed Value \$ 710,982,200.00 1 cent tax equals \$71,000

Public Works and Roads



- 6 Man Crew - 30.90 square miles
- Foreman – responsible for scheduling, equipment, department.
- Mechanic – repairs vehicles, equipment, Fire Trucks, etc.
- Driver/Operators – Roads, Drainage Pipes, Repairs, water meters.

Projected Road Work:

Lambert Road	\$ 13,200
Stony Brook	\$160,000
Wishing Well	\$200,000
Mohican	Applied State Aid

Guiderrails:

Stony Brook	\$200,000
Cobblewood	\$ 40,000
Walnut Valley & Dogwood	\$ 8,000

Projects:

	Road	Cost
Embankments on:	Belcher	\$215,000
	Mud Pond	\$220,000
Drainage:	Belcher	\$ 30,000
	Mt. Vernon	\$ 60,000 Pipe Replacement
Walnut Valley UST		\$400,000

Blairstown Township Police Department



Blairstown Police Department

Patrol Division

- ◆ Respond to all Calls for Service
- ◆ Enforcement local, county, state criminal laws, including motor vehicle
- ◆ Trained as First Responders - medical
- ◆ Emergency Medical Technicians - same level of care that Basic Life Support Ambulance provides
- ◆ Crash Reconstruction Investigations
- ◆ Certified or qualified in advanced driving while intoxicated testing
- ◆ School

Population 2015 Census 5,819
 On a Daily Basis higher population with Blair Academy Students, NWR & BES Students, Teachers, Support Staff, Nursery Schools, Businesses, Restaurants, & Airport.

Criminal Investigation Division

- Investigations all major crimes
- Assist the Patrol Division with initial investigations and crime scenes
- Process crime scenes for forensic evidence and photograph for future Court proceedings
- Execute search warrants - take video and audio taped interviews
- Background investigations for employment in Dept.
- Obtain or Transfer Liquor License background investigation
- Maintain records & identification on Megan's Law registrants
- Safekeeping of all property & Evidence
- Submit evidence to NJ State Police Labs

Cost for 24 Hr. Police Coverage in Blairstown

- Extra Cost for extending hours from 6am to 12pm to 24 hour shift.

\$414,106.01

- Estimated one tax point:

\$71,000.00

Tax Rate for 24 hr. coverage:

.0583 per \$100 of assessed value

Assessment	Per Year	Per Month
150,000	\$ 87.45	\$ 7.29
200,000	\$ 116.60	\$ 9.72
250,000	\$ 145.75	\$ 12.15
300,000	\$ 174.90	\$ 14.58
350,000	\$ 204.05	\$ 17.01
400,000	\$ 233.20	\$ 19.43
450,000	\$ 262.35	\$ 21.86
500,000	\$ 291.50	\$ 24.30
550,000	\$ 320.65	\$ 26.72

We provided you with facts and figures on cost to go 24hr. Shift. We will update our web site with any information that will help you to make your choice – Please let it be YOUR CHOICE, not a campaign for or against the change.

We are proposing a Referendum on the November Ballot – It will be the decision of the Blairstown Voters whether we expand the Police Department or leave as 6am – 12am.